Columbia Gorge Community College

2024 Ad Hoc Report

Addressing NWCCU 2020 Recommendation 3

March 1, 2024

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Institutional Report Certification Form

On behalf of the Institution, I certify that:

☐ There was broad participation/review by the campus community in the preparation of this report.

☐ The Institution remains in compliance with NWCCU Eligibility Requirements.

☐ The Institution will continue to remain in compliance throughout the duration of the institution's cycle of accreditation.

I understand that information provided in this report may affect the continued Candidacy or Accreditation of my institution. I certify that the information and data provided in the report are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

_____

(Name of Institution)

_____

(Name of Chief Executive Officer)

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(Signature of Chief Executive Officer)

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(Date)

Report Contributors

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Introduction

In Spring 2020, Columbia Gorge Community College (CGCC), a public, two-year community college and Hispanic-serving institution (HSI) in The Dalles, Oregon, submitted its most recent year seven report. Seven recommendations were made by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) that the institution has addressed in the ensuing years. This ad hoc report focuses on Recommendation 3 from our Spring 2020 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness:

> *Recommendation 3 - Systematically review disaggregated student achievement data and use it to close barriers to academic excellence and achievement (equity gaps). (2020 Standard(s) 1.D.2).*

Pursuant to our mid-cycle report and visit in Spring 2023, CGCC received feedback from NWCCU and its evaluators encouraging the college to continue developing a systematic review of disaggregated student outcomes. Specifically, evaluators emphasized the opportunity to better articulate cohesion of the institutional strategic plan, and the systems for using disaggregated student achievement data to achieve this goal. Consistent with this feedback, the college has begun to more directly center student experience and achievement in our institutional decision-making processes.

This 2024 Ad Hoc Self-Evaluation Report articulates how the college is creating and practically applying data-informed decision-making processes:

➢ *Data-Informed:* CGCC systematically gathers and reviews its disaggregated student achievement data in comparison to peer benchmarks;
➢ *Systems Alignment:* CGCC aligns its budgeting, planning and assessing processes in a data-informed cycle;
➢ *Strategy in Equity:* CGCC is redefining its strategic plan with an equity lens, to better and more appropriately inform the systems and tactics that serve our diverse community.

Institutional Context

While all institutions experience regular change within their organizations, it is worthwhile to note some of the more significant changes at CGCC since the start of its new accreditation cycle in academic year 2021-2022. All three vice presidential positions – Instructional Services, Student Services, and Finance – are new from the former seven-year cycle, as is the college president, Dr. Lawson, who joined CGCC in Summer 2023. The college also added a DEI office.

Additionally, in this new seven-year cycle, CGCC implemented its new student information system (SIS), Anthology. This system replaces an older SIS, RogueNet, which is no longer supported. Ultimately, the switch in SIS increases data capacity, although the college acknowledges some significant challenges in implementation. Finally, during this new cycle, the college began implementation of Guided Pathways practices and obtained a Title III grant to support those institutional efforts to improve equitable student access, success, and community.

Recommendation 3

CGCC systematically gathers and reviews its disaggregated student achievement data in comparison to peer benchmarks.

Institutional Data

Institutional research at CGCC is contracted with Linn-Benton Community College, whose Director of Institutional Effectiveness, Justin Smith, provides - amongst other data-related services - regular, timely, and customized reports and visualizations of CGCC's student data. CGCC leading and lagging student data are regularly represented in public-facing dashboards, such as [Coordinated Oregon Research Entreprise](#) (CORE), and also through the [Oregon Community College Student Success Dashboard](#) (OCCSSD). Institutional research will be a critical resource to the establishment and analysis of measurable indicators for the new strategic plan – success measures for which will be posted from our [Accreditation webpage](#).

Benchmarking Peer Institutions

In parallel to the creation of our new Strategic Plan, Strategic Enrollment Plan, and an aligned, collaborative Operational Planning process, so, too, is the college reimagining its systematic review of institutional assessment and student achievement data against benchmark institutions. To best serve these aspirations, and to focus data-gathering efforts, the President's Council has approved a set of peer institutions against which we shall measure institutional success.

In IPEDS, CGCC (420556) is categorized with the following attributes: Far West; Title IV participating, public, 2-year, degree-granting (associate's and certificates), and high transfer-high nontraditional, with an enrollment size of 1,000-4,999. Beyond CGCC's attributes, a selection pool of comparator institutions was selected on the following: U.S. only, non-service/non-other jurisdiction; associate's degree as the highest degree offered; remote/town urbanization; and expanded Carnegie classification to include all Associate's Colleges with high transfer or mixed transfer/CTE and high nontraditional or mixed nontraditional designations. From the twenty-seven (27) results generated, we identified fifteen (15) from which a set of 10-12 final schools will be selected based on access to similar data:

- Bay de Noc Community College (168883) - Escanaba, MI
- Big Bend Community College (243711) - Moses Lake, WA *x
- Blue Mountain Community College (208275) - Pendleton, OR *+
- Clatsop Community College (208415) - Astoria, OR **+
- Clovis Community College (187639) - Clovis, NM *
- College of the Siskiyous (123484) - Weed, CA **
- Dodge City Community College (154998) - Dodge City, KS *
- Eastern Arizona College (104577) - Thatcher, AZ **
- Mississippi Delta Community College (176008) - Moorhead, MS

- Northeastern Junior College (127732) - Sterling, CO **
- Oregon Coast Community College (423652) - Newport, OR **+
- Peninsula College (236258) - Port Angeles, WA x
- South Arkansas Community College (107974) - El Dorado, AR
- Tillamook Bay Community College (420723) - Tillamook, OR **+
- Western Texas College (229832) - Snyder, TX *

*Recognized as an *Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) (2021-22)* by Excelencia in Education.*
** Recognized as an *Emerging HSI (2021-22)* by Excelencia in Education.*
+ Cohort in the OCCSSD.*
x Additional benchmark school from NWCCU.*

Reviewing Our Data

To inform our ongoing annual operational planning and emergent needs planning processes, an annual review of our benchmarking data will occur in Spring term, at least at the President's Council and Leadership Council levels. At a similar frequency, presentations on these and other data will occur to the Board of Education and the greater college community - consistent with our goals of equity in access, equity in outcomes, and equity in community. Indeed, increased transparency through increased presentation of data to the Board of Education and the greater college community has been identified as a baseline practice by President Lawson. We aspire to improve our institutional performance across self-identified indicators of mission fulfillment, including exceeding our own past performance, and where we are above the average of benchmarked peers.

In terms of quality and types of data, we endeavor to obtain and review high-quality leading and lagging measures. Currently, our best source of disaggregated leading data is our OCCSSD, which features only benchmark institutions from Oregon. We acknowledge that our IPEDS 2023 Data Feedback Report is largely comprised of lagging indicators, and that because of the report's function, there are limits to its disaggregation. That said, with confirmation of our peer institutions, we shall seek to benchmark leading data to inform our improvement efforts. Ultimately, by the end of Spring term 2024, not only will the college have established its new mission fulfillment indicators, but a subset of the President's Council and Leadership Council will collaborate with our Institutional Researcher to articulate both the measures and processes that fit our benchmark goals. These will be communicated to our community, and help us achieve our priorities related to equity in access, student outcomes, and community.

Finally, beyond our benchmarking data, we have other sources of data that will help us in our ongoing decision-making efforts, including statewide and regional data (i.e., Oregon State Higher Education Coordinating Commission Higher Education Snapshots), Excelencia in Education HSI dashboards, our student outcomes data, and our mission indicators.

CGCC aligns its budgeting, planning and assessing processes in a data-informed cycle.

Effective, equity-minded, student-centered higher education institutions systematically review disaggregated student data to identify and close gaps to achievement of their self-identified goals. In doing so, these institutions are strengthened and better positioned to serve their communities. In an effort to demonstrate responsiveness to both the original recommendation, and its continued support during the Mid-Cycle Visit, we share two examples of how the Instructional Services Division is implementing new systems: (1) student achievement data review in Instructional Council, and (2) Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILO) assessment frequency.

Student Achievement Data

The CGCC Instructional Council (IC), co-chaired by the Vice President of Instructional Services (VPIS) and an elected Faculty chair, is composed of Academic Deans, Directors and Chairs. To better align operating planning, assessment, and budgeting processes, the VPIS introduced the need for annual review of student achievement data by IC. In Fall 2023, with the support of our Institutional Researcher, IC reviewed comprehensive disaggregated student grades data. The intent of the exercise was to identify trends across the student learning experience, as evidenced through grades earned, withdrawals and incompletes. IC then discussed and identified tactics to address and close equity gaps. This dataset was limited to credit students enrolled 2018-2023, and disaggregated by race/ethnicity, credit status, and age. In a breakout group exercise, trends and tactics identified by IC helped inform emergent needs and operational planning from the Instructional Services Division. Future disaggregated dataset discussions will include credits attempted versus completed, and adult basic education data.

Some examples of how this specific data review has tangibly informed college decision-making:

- **Mandatory Co-Requisites** - A specific lens to grades data in developmental Writing (90, 115) and college-level Writing (121, 122, 227), and developmental Math (60, 65, 95, 98) and college-level Math (105, 110, 111, 112, 243) has informed our efforts to accelerate adoption of corequisites models to support learners to and through college-level gateway courses. Across five years of Writing data, on average, Hispanic-identifying students are more enrolled in developmental Writing classes than White-identifying students, and earned a greater percentage of Non-Passing (DF) grades. Transversely, White-identifying students were more likely to have enrolled in college-level Writing courses, and earned a greater percentage of Passing (ABC) grades. Enrollment in optional Writing corequisites (WR115L, WR121L), which were installed in recent years, has been too low to gather statistically significant data, nor appropriately assess their longitudinal impacts on students. The Math dataset is a bit less consistent than is the Writing dataset, in terms of enrollment and performance. That said, overarching trends remain clear. While White-identifying students are generally more enrolled in all Math sections on average, Hispanic-identifying enrollment in developmental Math sections is most frequently close to or

greater than their White-identifying counterpart. Furthermore, Hispanic-identifying students receive a lower percentage of Passing (ABC) grades, and a higher percentage of Non-Passing (DF) grades than their White-identifying counterparts. Like the Writing dataset, the enrollment in optional Math corequisites (MTH95L, MTH105L, MTH111L, MTH243L) has been too low tell a significant story. The Progress and Completion Committee charged a Developmental Education Redesign Working Group to recommend a way to accelerate the pathway to college-level Math and Writing, and better support students through our co-requisite model. As a result, in the next academic year, we are moving to mandate Math and Writing co-requisites, and will be intentionally planning the accelerated removal of developmental courses.

- **Serving Our Latinx Students** - In disaggregating overall grades data by Race/Ethnicity to White-identifying and Hispanic-identifying students, we identified an achievement gap for which systematic and directed interventions are required. While the Withdrawal rates between Hispanic-identifying and White-identifying students is consistent annually over the data (6%), Hispanic-identifying students annually earn a higher percentage of Non-Passing grades (DF) than the total average, at roughly 5% points more than White-identifying students per year. Additionally, the five-year total average for Passing grades (ABC) is 82% for all students - and we identified trends in performance of our students against that average. In every year except 2019-20, the percentage of Hispanic-identifying students earning Passing grades does not meet the total and annual averages. Conversely, the percentage of White-identifying students earning Passing grades exceeds the total and annual averages in every year except 2022-23 (80%). This data justifies establishment of Strategic and Tactical Enrollment Plan foci on our Latinx community and students, and DEI Plan tactics to, amongst other significant efforts, develop our faculty in culturally-responsive pedagogy, and hire more representative faculty and staff, including bilingual and bicultural supports.

- **Improving Data and Technology** - Gaps or lack of clarity in certain data underscored both a need and opportunity to improve our internal data collection processes and workflows that have been further frustrated by the integration of a new SIS. For example, the number of students identified as "Unknown" in Race/Ethnicity grew dramatically over the years of integration. From academic year 2018-19, in the abovementioned Writing dataset, the increase was 403% (from 27 to 136), and in Math 235% (from 23 to 77). Additionally, a discrepancy between students earning a Non-Passing grade (DF) was specifically highlighted by one discipline area who track student data and communicate with students on their standing throughout the term. General feedback from IC also included the need for improved classroom technological supports to ensure teaching and learning success. The need for improved data collection processes and workflows, and classroom technology, were iterated across divisional operational plans, and triangulated need for further support

to Information Technology Services (ITS) and our SIS integration and support. In our emergent needs process, both managed ITS services and a new statement of work for SIS integration supports were approved and funded.

ILO Assessment Frequency

On the recommendation of the Mid-Cycle Review evaluation team, the Curriculum and Academic Assessment Department and its Institutional Learning Outcomes Assessment Committee, consisting of academic administrators and faculty, identified an opportunity to increase the frequency of our ILO assessment to better identify and track gaps in student mastery and understanding. To date, CGCC has assessed each one of its five ILOs, one per year, over a [five-year cycle](#). The Director of Curriculum and Academic Assessment and the Academic Assessment Coordinator led an IC agenda item to request faculty support for increased ILO assessment in a given year. They also introduced the idea of evaluating more than one ILO in a given year, requesting faculty input on how the ILO assessment process may be adapted in the next year and a half as the college moves towards its third cycle of ILO assessment in 2025-26. Finally, the Curriculum & Academic Assessment Department (CAAD) has been working with faculty chairs to help improve the analysis and interpretation of assessment results, with the goal of improved application in decision making. These conversations, and the review and reporting of ILO assessment data, will continue through IC and the ILO Assessment Committee.

CGCC is redefining its strategic plan with an equity lens, to better and more appropriately inform the systems and tactics that serve our community.

The future direction of the college is currently being written by our college community, and informed by the disaggregated data that defines our past and present. Led by President Lawson, championed by all levels of the organization, and supported by our elected Board of Education, the college is intentionally redefining its Strategic Plan, and establishing a Strategic Enrollment Management Plan with an equity lens. Equitable student access, outcomes, and community impact are at the core of each of the college's priorities.

Strategic Planning

In August 2023, the college, under our new president, Dr. Kenneth Lawson, initiated a college-wide effort to redefine our mission, vision, guiding principles and priorities - and to align all systems to that new [Strategic Plan](#). This collaborative, intentional, iterative process included our entire community, from President's Council to Leadership Council and Instructional Council, to college faculty, staff and students, and to our external business, industry, and community stakeholders. Feedback from all stages of the process helped refine the final plan, which was completed in January 2024. The college is currently working on defining the objectives and indicators to measure institutional success. By June 2024, the college will formally adopt the new objectives and indicators in alignment with college priorities.

Also starting in Fall 2024, the college began to align its planning processes. In an effort to create a formal planning process, the college identified the need for formal processes in the following areas: Strategic Enrollment Management Planning, and annual Institutional/Operational Planning. These areas – along with the Strategic Plan, and "emergent needs" planning – are all part of the college-identified planning process outlined in the current [Planning Calendar.](#) Achievements and efforts in all planning processes are communicated regularly to the college community through Council Connections, Presidential Monthly Meetings, Board of Education Meetings, and all Councils.

Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) Planning

In Fall 2024, the college also began developing its first Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) Plan. Led by President Lawson, and informed by a robust environmental scan of community, workforce and student success data by a subset of President's Council, this process identified and collaboratively confirmed seven target populations for the college for the next three to five years: K-12 partnerships, adult basic education, Latinx and traditionally underserved students, workforce development, stop-outs, athletics, and international students. Diverse campus representations (i.e., faculty, classified staff, and administrators from across all institutional divisions) gathered in early Fall 2024 to review datasets for each target population to identify trends and opportunities to improve our service with these groups. After Leadership Council confirmed these datasets, President's Council members were tasked with leading the components of our Tactical Enrollment Management (TEM) Plan, that is comprised of four distinct sub-plans: Marketing, Outreach and Recruitment, New Instructional Programs, and Progress and Completion. Connected to and informing this plan are our other institutional plans: DEI, Infrastructure, and Facilities. The first iteration of the TEM plan is intended to be completed by the end of Winter term 2024, to plug into annual operational planning processes.

Annual Operational Planning

Finally, CGCC also initiated in Fall 2024 its new operational planning process, inclusive of emergent needs planning, that has been implemented across the institution. All divisions now participate in the same collaborative, iterative process to identify goals and emergent needs for the year, specifically articulating those goals or needs with budgetary allocation requirements. The first run of this ground-up process had its first review by the president and vice-presidents, who met in early Winter 2024 to review, map, and allocate emergent needs expressed by all divisions for this current academic year. In Spring 2024, as we finalize our budgeting process, the next emergent needs review process will occur for the following year. The process and results of each of these processes will be communicated to the college community so everyone is aware of how their work has informed the process.

Conclusion

Despite early challenges in our seven-year cycle presented by organizational change and adaptations precipitated by the pandemic, CGCC is collaboratively establishing data-informed, aligned, and equity-minded systems for decision-making. To identify and close equity gaps across our college community, we have committed to reviewing disaggregated and varied data, and then building systems to make a difference for all our students. We have practically applied the spirit of this work – as evidenced by our Instructional Council and Curriculum and Academic Assessment approaches, and at the big picture level, we are creating a new purpose and direction for the college – through Strategic Planning, Strategic Enrollment Management Planning, and Operational Planning. We look forward to seeing our growth, as measured through our new indicators this year and in the coming years.